

REMARKS

Claims 13-24 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, Claims 13, 14, 16 and 19 are currently amended, Claims 17 and 21 are canceled without prejudice, and Claims 15, 18, 20 and 22-24 remain unchanged.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's granting an interview with the Applicants' representative on December 9, 2008. During the interview Claims 13 and 24 were discussed, as well as Richmond et al., US Patent No. 5873518 (Richmond '518), and how the art relates to the claims. Although no agreement was reached with respect to claim allowance, it was agreed that the Applicants will submit an amendment further defining the claim limitations.

The claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, Claims 13-17 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Richmond '518. Claims 18-23 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Richmond '518 in view of Hengelein et al, US Patent Publication No. 2004/0140677 (Hengelein '677). Claim 24 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Richmond '518 in view of Hengelein '677, and further in view of Faunce, US Patent No. 6319015 (Faunce '015) and Roese, US Patent Publication No. 2005/0106924 (Roese '924).

Independent Claim 13 recites an electric interface for water-bearing household devices including an electronic circuit board for operatively mounting to the water-bearing household device and a program control. At least one magnetic valve is mounted to the circuit board in fluid communication with a liquid line of the water-bearing household appliance for controlling the flow of liquid therethrough. Further, at least one electronic component for controlling the at least one magnetic valve with the at least one electronic component being a valve controller is embodied in a microprocessor mounted

to the circuit board and integrated into a component group that is connected to the program control.

Richmond '518 discloses a valve body having two valve actuators and a pressure sensor fitted thereto. With reference to Figure 3, Richmond '518 discloses a water valve assembly 12 including solenoid-controlled cold-water valve 30 and a hot-water valve 32. Both the cold-water valve 30 and the hot-water valve 32 include a diaphragm 34, a diaphragm insert 36, a guide to 38, and an armature 40. Both the cold-water valve 30 and the hot-water valve 32 are sealingly engaged to the valve body 18 at a retention group 42 as illustrated in Figure 5. (Col. 3, ll. 52-57.) Upon application of an electric current to a pair of terminals 48, 50 (See Figure 2) associated with the cold-water valve 30 and the hot-water valve 32, respectively, a magnetic field is generated on a number of pole pieces 52 thereby urging the armature 40 in the general direction of Arrow A in Figure 3. When the armature 40 is urged in the general direction of Arrow A, the diaphragm insert 36 and therefore the diaphragm 34 are likewise urged in the direction of Arrow A, thereby causing the diaphragm 34 to be spaced apart from the valving surface 46, thereby opening the valve. (Col. 3, ll.66-67; Col. 4, ll.1-9). The water valve assembly 12 further includes a sensing device 72, a pressure inlet no. 74 and a thermal conductor 76. The pressure inlet no. 74 has a pressure channel 74A defined therein which is coupled into the pressure sense line 14, as seen in figure 1. (Col. 4, ll. 61-65). As seen in Figure 10, the sensing device 72 is electronically coupled to an electronic control circuit 92. (Col. 6, ll. 19-20).

As seen from the foregoing, Richmond '518 discloses a valve body having valve actuators thereon as well as a pressure sensor formed therewith. However, Richmond '518 does not disclose that magnetic valves are mounted to a circuit board with the circuit board being operatively mounted to the water bearing household device. Further, there is not at least one electronic component for controlling the magnetic valve mounted to any circuit board nor is the control mounted to the valve body of Richmond '518.

Accordingly, Richmond '518 cannot be said to anticipate the present invention. Further, Richmond '518 cannot be combinable with any other reference to achieve the features of the present invention.

Hengelein '677 is directed to a door-locking assembly or a door latch suited for a washing machine door (see abstract). Hengelein '677 does not make up the deficiencies of Richmond '518 with respect to the disclosure of the structure of the present invention and therefore, a combination of Hengelein '677 and Richmond '518 would not result in the present invention presenting such a combination where possible.

Faunce '015 discloses a garment electrical connector for use with fabric, as seen in Figure 1 and as discussed in the Abstract. Roesse '924 discloses a lockable electric plug and socket connection which includes a mechanical latching mechanism as seen in Figures 6 and 7. Neither Faunce '015 nor Roesse '924 address or make up the deficiencies of the Richmond '518 and Hengelein '677 patents. Therefore, the combination cannot be used to render Claim 24 obvious.

For these and other reasons, Richmond '518 does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 13. Therefore, Claim 13 is allowable. Claims 14-16, 18-20 and 22-24 depend from Claim 13 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

For these and other reasons, Richmond '518 and Hengelein '677, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by dependent Claims 14-16, 18-20, 22 and 23. Therefore, Claims 14-16, 18-20, 22 and 23 are allowable. In addition, Claims 14-16, 18-20, 22 and 23 depend from Claim 13 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

For these and other reasons, Richmond '518, Hengelein '677, Faunce '015 and Roese '677 either alone or in any combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by dependent Claim 24. Therefore, Claim 24 is allowable. In addition Claim 24 depends from Claim 13 and is allowable for the same reasons and also because additional patentable subject matter is recited.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 13 – 16, 18 – 20 and 22 - 24 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,



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